CollegeBoard Pre-AP®

UNIT

3

Pre-AP® English 1

STUDENT READER

Compelling Evidence

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“The Work You Do, the Person You Are”

TONI MORRISON

From *The New Yorker*

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MY NOTES

The pleasure of being necessary to my parents was profound. I was not like the children in folktales: burdensome mouths to feed.

1 All I had to do for the two dollars was clean Her house for a few hours after school. It was a beautiful house, too, with a plastic-covered sofa and chairs, wall-to-wall blue-and-white carpeting, a white enamel stove, a washing machine and a dryer—things that were common in Her neighborhood, absent in mine. In the middle of the war, She had butter, sugar, steaks, and seam-up-the-back stockings.

2 I knew how to scrub floors on my knees and how to wash clothes in our zinc tub, but I had never seen a Hoover vacuum cleaner or an iron that wasn't heated by fire.

3 Part of my pride in working for Her was earning money I could squander: on movies, candy, paddleballs, jacks, ice-cream cones. But a larger part of my pride was based on the fact that I gave half my wages to my mother, which meant that some of my earnings were used for real things—an insurance-policy payment or what was owed to the milkman or the iceman. The pleasure of being necessary to my parents was profound. I was not like the children in folktales: burdensome mouths to feed, nuisances to be corrected, problems so severe that they were abandoned to the forest. I had a status that doing routine chores in my house did not provide—and it earned me a slow smile, an approving nod from an adult. Confirmations that I was adultlike, not childlike.

4 In those days, the forties, children were not just loved or liked; they were needed. They could earn money; they could care for children younger than themselves; they could work the farm, take care of the herd, run errands, and much more. I suspect that children aren't needed in that way now. They are loved, doted on, protected, and helped. Fine, and yet …

5 Little by little, I got better at cleaning Her house—good enough to be given more to do, much more. I was ordered to carry bookcases upstairs and, once, to move a piano from one side of a room to the other. I fell carrying the bookcases. And after pushing the piano my arms and legs hurt so badly. I wanted to refuse, or at least to complain, but I was afraid She would fire me, and I would lose the freedom the dollar

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gave me, as well as the standing I had at home—although both were slowly being eroded. She began to offer me her clothes, for a price. Impressed by these worn things, which looked simply gorgeous to a little girl who had only two dresses to wear to school, I bought a few. Until my mother asked me if I really wanted to work for castoffs. So I learned to say "No, thank you" to a faded sweater offered for a quarter of a week's pay.

6 Still, I had trouble summoning the courage to discuss or object to the increasing demands She made. And I knew that if I told my mother how unhappy I was she would tell me to quit. Then one day, alone in the kitchen with my father, I let drop a few whines about the job. I gave him details, examples of what troubled me, yet although he listened intently, I saw no sympathy in his eyes. No "Oh, you poor little thing." Perhaps he understood that what I wanted was a solution to the job, not an escape from it. In any case, he put down his cup of coffee and said, "Listen. You don't live there. You live here. With your people. Go to work. Get your money. And come on home."

7 That was what he said. This was what I heard:

1. Whatever the work is, do it well—not for the boss but for yourself.
2. You make the job; it doesn't make you.
3. Your real life is with us, your family.
4. You are not the work you do; you are the person you are.

8 I have worked for all sorts of people since then, geniuses and morons, quick-witted and dull, bighearted and narrow. I've had many kinds of jobs, but since that conversation with my father I have never considered the level of labor to be the measure of myself, and I have never placed the security of a job above the value of home.

MY NOTES

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“Drowning in Dishes, but Finding a Home”

DANIAL ADKISON

From *The New York Times*

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MY NOTES

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1 The people who make a difference in your life come in all types. Some write on a chalkboard. Some wear a sports uniform. Some wear a suit and tie. For me, that person wore a tie with a Pizza Hut logo on it.

2 I started working at Pizza Hut in December 1989, when I was a freshman in high school. Parents in my small western Colorado town encouraged teenagers to work in the service industry after school and on weekends. It kept us out of trouble.

3 Having a job also kept me out of the house. I grew up mostly with my mother, and I never knew my biological father. My younger sister, younger brother and I went through a series of stepfathers. My relationship with those men was almost always fraught, and I was always looking for reasons to be away from home.

4 The Pizza Hut was old, and in the back it had three giant sinks instead of a dishwasher. One basin was for soapy water, one for rinsing and the other for sanitizing, using a tablet that made me cough when I dropped it into the hot water. All new employees started by washing dishes and busing tables. If they proved their mettle, they learned to make pizzas, cut and serve them on wooden paddles and take orders.

5 On my first night, the dishes piled up after the dinner rush: plates, silverware, cups and oily black deep-dish pans, which came clean only with a lot of soap and scrubbing in steaming-

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hot water. I couldn't keep up, and stacks of dishes formed on all sides of me. Every time I made a dent in the pile, the call came back for help clearing tables out front, and I returned with brown tubs full of more dirty dishes.

6 At home, the chore I hated most was dishes. A few years earlier, my mother's then boyfriend instilled a loathing of that task by making me scrub the Teflon off a cookie sheet, believing that it was grease, while he sat on the couch and smoked cigarettes. That boyfriend was gone, but another with a different set of problems had taken his place.

7 My shift was supposed to end at 9 p.m., but when I asked to leave, the manager, Jeff, shook his head. "Not until the work is done," he said. "You leave a clean station." I was angry and thought about quitting, but I scrubbed, rinsed and sanitized until after 10 that night.

8 I stayed on dish duty for weeks. My heart sank every time I arrived at work and saw my name written next to "dishes" on the position chart. I spent my shifts behind those steel sinks, being splashed with greasy water. After work, my red-and-white-checked button-up shirt and gray polyester pants smelled like onions, olives and oil. At home, I sometimes found green peppers in my socks. I hated every minute I spent on dish duty, and I wasn't afraid to let everyone around me know it.

9 One slow midweek night, when I managed to catch up on dishes and clean out the sinks early, I asked Jeff when I could do something different. "Do you know why you're still doing dishes?" he asked. "Because you keep complaining about it." Nobody likes to work with a complainer, he said. But, he promised, if I continued to leave a clean station and not complain, next week he would put me on the "make table," where pizzas were assembled before being put into the oven.

10 A few days later, when I reported for my after-school shift, I saw my name penciled not in the "dishes" box but in the "make table" box. I was ecstatic.

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MY NOTES

11 Jeff had a special way of running his restaurant. From a crop of teenagers, he assembled a team of employees who cared about their work—and one another. Most of my best friends from high school also worked at Pizza Hut, and some of my best memories were made under that red roof.

12 Pizza Hut became not only my escape from home but also, in many ways, an alternate home. In my real home, I felt unstable and out of control. At work, the path seemed clear: Work hard and do things right, and you will succeed. This model had not seemed possible before.

13 For one of the first times in my life, I felt empowered. By the time I was in 11th grade, Jeff had promoted me to shift manager. By my senior year, I was an assistant manager, responsible for much of the bookkeeping, inventory and scheduling. I was in charge when Jeff was away.

14 Our staff was like a second family. We had all-day staff parties that started with rafting trips and ended with dinner and movies. Most of us played on a softball team. We went camping together. We had water fights in the parking lot and played music on the jukebox, turned up to full blast, after all the customers had left.

15 Jeff was the leader of this unlikely family. He was about 15 years older than me and had recently gone through a divorce. I never considered it at the time, because he seemed to be having as much fun as everyone else, but if I was using my job to create the family I wish I'd had, it was possible that he was, too.

16 Senior year arrived, and though I loved that job, I knew I would go to college the next fall. I was an A student in class but probably about a C-minus in applying to schools. My mom hadn't gone to college, and I didn't have a lot of logistical or financial support at home. I had received a pile of brochures from colleges, but I didn't know where to start—and, at $40, every application fee cost me half a day's pay.

17 A guidance counselor persuaded me to apply to Boston University, which seemed great, primarily because of its distance from Colorado. The scholarship application had to be in by the end of November—and I was definitely not going there without a big scholarship. But maybe because of the fee

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or because of my sheer cluelessness, I kept putting off the application.

18 I still had not mailed it the day before it was due. At work that day, I offhandedly mentioned to Jeff that an application was due the next day but that I hadn't mailed it. He opened a drawer and took out an overnight envelope. He told me to stop what I was doing, leave work and send the application immediately. I protested about the expense of overnight postage, but he said he would cover it.

19 I ended up getting into B.U., with a scholarship, but I still had never even visited Boston. Though my mom worked hard to take care of my siblings and me, there just was no room in the budget to send me on a college visit. So I figured I would just see the school when I got there in August.

20 Jeff surprised me with an early graduation present: a trip to Boston. He paid for the hotel, the car and the plane tickets. We toured campus and visited Fenway Park and did some sightseeing around New England. We ate at a lot of Pizza Huts, and we judged them against ours. The verdict: None of them seemed to be very much fun.

21 Before I headed to college, I told Jeff that I would come back to work over winter break. While I was away, he was promoted to regional manager, and a different person was put in charge of our store. I went back anyway, and though I did my best to enjoy it, the magic was gone. The family had dispersed, and I felt free to shift my mind-set to college and the future.

22 I have kept in touch with Jeff over the years. We usually meet for lunch when I'm in town. Sometimes we even have pizza.

23 Washing dishes for Jeff was grueling, greasy work. But then again, making a pizza, or driving a truck, or baking a cake, or any of countless other jobs are not always enjoyable in themselves, either. Out of all the lessons I learned from that guy in the Pizza Hut tie, maybe the biggest is that any job can be the best job if you have the right boss.

MY NOTES

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“What to Do with the Kids This Summer? Put ’Em to Work”

BEN SASSE

From *The New York Times*

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MY NOTES

1 Summer break 1985 was defined by my 4:30 a.m. alarm. The bus rolled up at 5, and my friends and I stumbled on, fighting off sleep until we arrived at the fields. Detasseling corn was a rite of passage in this Nebraska town: In order to cross-pollinate top-notch seed corn in those days, you needed people, lots of them, to walk through the fields to pull corn tassels manually from individual rows.

2 The job stank. It's wet and chilly in the field that early. Giant sprinklers called center pivots often got stuck and flooded acres with ankle-deep cold water. We'd start out wearing sweatshirts underneath trash bag ponchos, but by 10, as temperatures approached triple digits, we'd shed layers. For the rest of the day, our bare skin would brush against sharp corn leaves until it was marked with innumerable paper cuts.

3 We would get home covered in nasty rashes, caked in mud and bone-tired. I'd go to bed in the late afternoon and sleep straight through till the alarm sounded again, for weeks on end.

4 That was our summer vacation. What do our kids do today?

5 It's not an idle question. Nearly a quarter-century on, when I became the president of Midland University back in this same Nebraska town, one of the first things I noticed was how few of our students had done any hard physical work before college. Detasseling corn, like a lot of agricultural work, is now done mostly by machine.

6 And parents, on the whole, had fewer household labor needs and could afford to spare their kids the less pleasant experiences of their own childhoods, while providing them with things they wish they'd had, as well as opportunities to cultivate new skills. The time our students didn't spend in school was mostly spent consuming: products, media and entertainment, especially entertainment.

7 Another thing I noticed was an unnerving passivity. When I saw students doing their campus jobs, they seemed to have a tough time. Over and over, faculty members and administrators noted how their students' limited experience with hard work made them oddly fuzzy-headed when facing real-world problems rather than classroom tests.

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8 I was worried. How would these kids survive once they left home for good? And how would an America built on self-discipline and deferred gratification survive?

9 Adolescence is a great thing, but we've made it too long. It's supposed to be a protected space in which kids who've become biologically adult are not obligated to immediately become emotionally, morally and financially adult. Done right, adolescence is a greenhouse phase, but adolescence should not be an escape from adulthood; it should be when we learn *how* to become adults.

10 We're parenting too much, too long. Our efforts to protect our kids from hurt feelings, tedious chores, money worries and the like are well intentioned. But many of us, perhaps especially middle-class parents, are unwittingly enabling many of our kids to not grow up.

11 What can we do about it—especially during these long summer months when our kids expect to be entertained? What's the modern equivalent of detasseling corn?

12 My wife, Melissa, and I, together with our neighbors, try to create experiences for our kids that build character. We want our kids to exercise their muscles and their minds.

13 Last year, we sent our eldest child, Corrie, then 14, to spend a month working on a cattle ranch. When we dropped her off, she was nervous but eager. Between checking cows for pregnancies—a job that involves a shoulder-length glove—and bottle-feeding orphaned heifers, she loved it and hated it. But she knew that her mild suffering was also a formative experience for a lifetime.

14 Not everyone lives in a big cattle state, and younger kids require more parental supervision. I also don't romanticize agrarian life—there's too much manure around for it to be truly idyllic—but meaningful work for kids is less about any particular task than the habits the hours teach. The effort involved and the struggles, once overcome, become the scar tissue of future character.

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15 Look around your neighborhood and see what ways your kids could serve their community. Even in this digital age, lawns need to be mowed and lemonade stands can break even.

16 Older folks will benefit from the help, and your kids will gain from the perspective of people who've been on the planet longer than they have. Younger kids can work alongside Mom and Dad, too (just know that everything will take twice as long). The point isn't how perfect your neighbor's lawn looks; the point is that your kids can learn to work toward making a contribution to their community.

17 We should also encourage our kids to travel. I'm not talking about the grand European tour or the Chevy Chase road trip. Travel is simply an opportunity to help our kids to get out of their comfort zones, learn to see different social and economic arrangements. I remember my wife (then my college girlfriend) tugging me along to volunteer on a re-entry preparation program for Boston inmates.

18 Start close to home and visit a different neighborhood—you don't have eyes to see your own community until you've visited another. Travel need not be about changing locations, but reaching across generations to break out of the artificial age segregation of our era. Getting out of one's own bubble can be dramatic.

19 Few experiences help our kids discover the distinction between needs and wants like the great outdoors. It doesn't have to be a hike through the Yukon, but just living out of a backpack for a long weekend where they take an active role in planning meals, buying food, picking a site and setting up the tent. The key thing is not to have been passive consumers on someone else's trip. They'll have been the planners, the decision makers and the risk calculators, while you're still there to make sure nothing goes too far off the rails.

20 We also want our kids to travel into literature. So we work with our children to build reading lists of books that they will wrestle with and be shaped by for the rest of their lives. Becoming a reader grows our horizons, our appetite for the good, the true and the beautiful, and our empathy.

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21 Not everything will work for every family. The challenge of adolescence is not going to be solved in a single summer. The health of our republic depends on shared principles like the First Amendment, but it is also built on the Teddy Roosevelt-like vigor of its citizens and local self-reliance. This should be a gift of these long summer days to our children.

22 My grandfather had a saying from the farm that "every hour of sleep before midnight is worth two hours of sleep after midnight." I don't know about the science of that, yet I know what he meant: that you should get up and out to work early enough that you're tired enough to feel the value of being able to get to bed early again.

23 I learned that lesson in 1985. If my kids get nothing else from this summer, I hope they learn it, too.

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“The Decline of the American Teenager’s Summer Job”

LEXINGTON

From *The Economist*

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MY NOTES

It is striking how often self-made Americans have stories to tell about boring summer jobs

1 The first time that Ronald Reagan appeared on a newspaper front page was as a teenage lifeguard, hailed for saving a drowning man from a fast-flowing river. The future president was not yet "Ronnie," America's reassuring, twinkling, optimist-in-chief. He was still "Dutch," to use his childhood nickname: a slim, bespectacled youth, serious to the point of priggishness. A biographer, Garry Wills, unearthed a high school yearbook in which Reagan scolded swimmers he pulled from the cool, treacherous Rock River, near his boyhood home of Dixon, Illinois. "A big hippopotamus with a sandwich in each hand, and some firewater tanked away," Reagan wrote of one. Each summer from 1927 to 1932 the teenager would rise early to collect a 300lb block of ice and hamburger supplies before driving in his employer's van to the river, working 12 hours a day, seven days a week. The post offered responsibility, money for college and stability in a childhood blighted by frequent moves, brushes with financial ruin and his father's drinking. There was glory, too: in all he saved 77 lives. A picture of the Rock River hung in Reagan's Oval Office.

2 Strikingly often, self-made Americans have stories to share about teenage jobs, involving alarm clocks clanging before dawn, aching muscles, stern bosses and soul-fortifying hours of boredom. In 1978, a record year in the annals of the Bureau of Labour Statistics, 72% of all teenagers were employed in July, the peak month for youthful ice-cream scooping, shelf-stacking and burger-flipping. But for two decades the traditional summer job has been in decline, with 43% of teens working in July 2016.

3 Lexington decided to head to Dixon to ask why. This being an anxious and litigious age, Reagan's river beach is closed now. But the YMCA that trained him in lifesaving (and where he paraded as a drum major) still hires lifeguards. This summer finds one of them, Lexi Nelson, 18, between high school and community college, where she will study dental hygiene. Perhaps a quarter of her friends are working this season. The rest have mixed views of her job, which can start at five in the morning. "When I get up early they bash on it," Miss

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Nelson reports, "but most of the time they're jealous of the money." Lifeguarding in an indoor pool is not the most exciting job, she concedes, but that teaches patience.

4 The story of the vanishing job is not a simple one. Ask teenagers, their employers and the mayor of Dixon—a business-owner who hires teenagers each summer at a pair of sandwich shops and a frozen yogurt store—and they point to two main causes: well-meaning adults and a changing economy.

5 Reagan's stirring example is still taught in Dixon, a trim, conservative town, with an equestrian statue of the president on its riverfront and loudspeakers on lamp-posts that play the Carpenters and other easy-listening classics. But many parents discourage teens from working, it is widely agreed. Parents instead tell their children to study, take summer courses, volunteer or practise for sports that might help them compete for college places.

6 Local keepers of the Reagan flame see a town still filled with opportunities for self-advancement. Patrick Gorman, director of the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home, a museum that preserves a house rented by the president's family in Dixon, is confident that anyone who wants a job can find one, even if it might be "detasseling" corn—picking pollen tassels from growing corn cobs, an arduous summer task traditionally reserved for the young, involving cold mornings, baking middays and scratches from corn leaves. Mr Gorman easily found six teenagers to volunteer as museum guides: "Good kids migrate to good kids," he beams.

7 Not all teenagers have the same needs. The three lifeguards interviewed at the YMCA are either college-bound or plan to be, and part-time work suits them. Bosses at the "Y" note that youngsters with only a high-school education typically have a different goal: landing a full-time job with health insurance and benefits.

8 Liandro Arellano Jr., Dixon's mayor, argues that teenage job prospects have been complicated by well-intentioned politicians raising the state-wide minimum wage to

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$8.25 an hour. For that pay it is both tempting and possible to hire college students or older workers with a proven job record, references and the ability to turn up on time, says Mr Arellano, a Republican. The youngest workers, below 18, earn $7.75 but need more training, and those aged 15 need work permits and cannot touch slicers or big bread knives. Larger economic forces have buffeted Dixon, too. After the credit crunch of 2008, a flood of laid-off factory workers and experienced adults wanted to work for Mr Arellano. With unemployment rates now below 5% in Dixon, applicants for entry-level jobs are getting younger again. Teenagers can be fine summer helpers, he says—"They're very excited about their first job"—though keeping them off smartphones is "a constant battle."

Buy That Teenager an Alarm Clock

9 Nationwide, affluent white teenagers have historically been much more likely to take summer jobs than lower-income, non-white youths. Family connections help, and it is easier to find work at a golf course or tennis club than amid inner-city blight. Though big cities like Chicago, 100 miles from Dixon, have government-run schemes that prod employers to offer summer work, demand exceeds supply: last year 77,000 Chicago youths applied for 31,000 summer jobs or internships. For all that, some of Mr Arellano's worst staff have been youngsters who do not need the money or want a job reference: they are the ones who quit without warning to go on a family holiday. Well-off parents are not always "super-supportive," he sighs.

10 Some parents may question the value of manual work in an age of high-tech change. But an elite education counts for little without self-discipline and resilience. Drudgery can teach humility: when hauling boxes, a brain full of algebra matters less than a teen's muscles. At best, it can breach the social barriers that harm democracy. Summer jobs are called all-American for a reason.

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"Teenagers Have Stopped Getting Summer Jobs—Why?"

DEREK THOMPSON

From *The Atlantic*

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MY NOTES

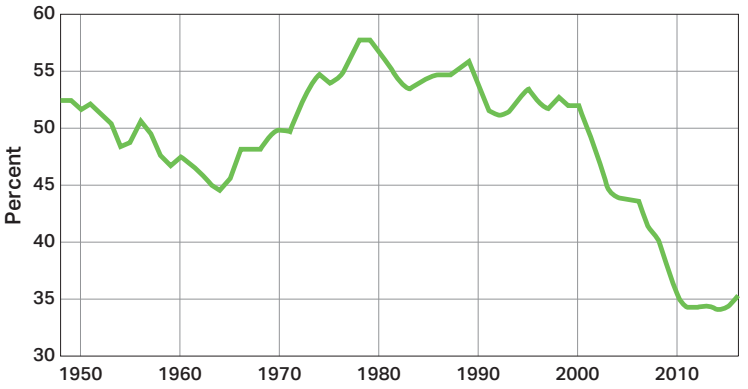
Most used to work in July and August. Now the vast majority don't. Are they being lazy, or strategic?

1 The summer job is considered a rite of passage for the American Teenager. It is a time when tossing newspaper bundles and bussing restaurant tables acts as a rehearsal for weightier adult responsibilities, like bundling investments and bussing dinner-party plates. But in the last few decades, the summer job has been disappearing. In the summer of 1978, 60 percent of teens were working or looking for work. Last summer, just 35 percent were.

2 Why did American teens stop trying to get summer jobs? One typical answer is: They're just kids, and kids are getting lazier.

3 One can rule out that hypothesis pretty quickly. The number of teens in the workforce has collapsed since 2000, as the graph below shows. But the share of NEETs—young people who are "Neither in Education, Employment, or Training"—has been extraordinarily steady. In fact, it has not budged more than 0.1 percentage point since the late 1990s. Just 7 percent of American teens are NEETs, which is lower than France and about the same as the mean of all advanced economies in the OECD. The supposed laziness of American teenagers is unchanging and, literally, average.

Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate: 16-to-19-Year-Olds



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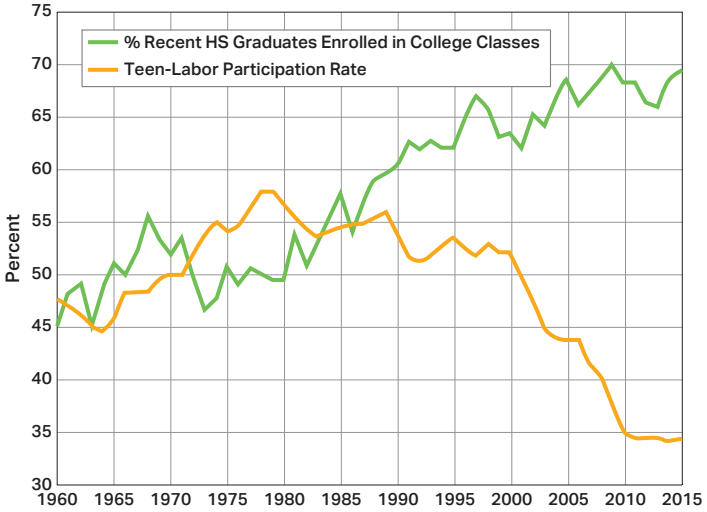
4 A better answer is that teenagers aren't spending more time on the couch, but rather spending more time in the classroom. Education is to blame, rather than indolence. Teens are remaining in high school longer, going to college more often, and taking more summer classes. The percent of recent high-school graduates enrolled in college—both two-year and four-year—has grown by 25 percentage points. That is almost exactly the decline in the teenage labor-force participation rate.

Teen-Labor Participation Rate vs. Share of New High School Graduates in College



5 With tougher high-school requirements and greater pressure to go to college, summer classes are the new summer job. The percent of 16-to-19-year-olds enrolled in summer school has tripled in the last 20 years, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The rise may be directly related to the fact that parents and high schools are encouraging students to take on more classwork, according to Ben Steverman, a *Bloomberg* reporter who covers teen employment. He finds that the percentage of high-school grads completing at least four years of English, three years of science, math, and social science, and two years of foreign language has *sextupled* since the early 1980s.

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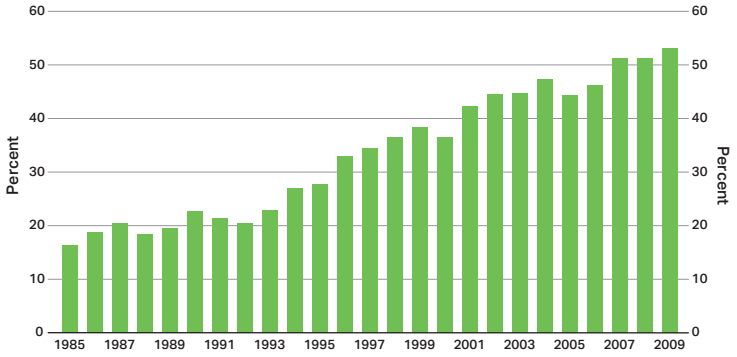
Share of Teenagers Taking Summer Classes



6 The second reason why teens work less today is that employers are more reluctant to hire them. First, the rise of low-skill immigration in the last few decades has created more competition for exactly the sort of jobs that teenagers used to do, like grocery-store cashiers, restaurant servers, and retail salespeople. Second, older Americans stay in the workforce longer than ever, and many of them wind down their careers in office secretary and retail jobs, which used to be the province of 16-year-olds in the summer. Third, the number of federally funded summer jobs, where students work temporarily with their local government, has declined. At the same time, the minimum wage has grown, which may have discouraged bosses from taking on young inexperienced workers who are only "worth" hiring at a salary that's become illegal. Together, these policies have reduced the number of temporary paid jobs for teenagers in the public and private sector. Fourth, companies have caught on to the fact that if they want to hire teenagers, they don't have to pay them, at all: There has been an extraordinary rise in unpaid internships over the last decade. Although these teenage interns are clearly working, they don't show up in the official employment statistics, because they're not getting paid.

7 The last big-picture explanation for the demise of teen summer jobs is cultural. Teenagers are exquisitely sensitive to the social norms of their peers. If they see cool older teenagers scooping ice cream during their freshman summer, they'll really look forward to a job scooping ice cream during their sophomore summer. But any social feedback loop can spin both ways. Recently, the cultural norm is shifting

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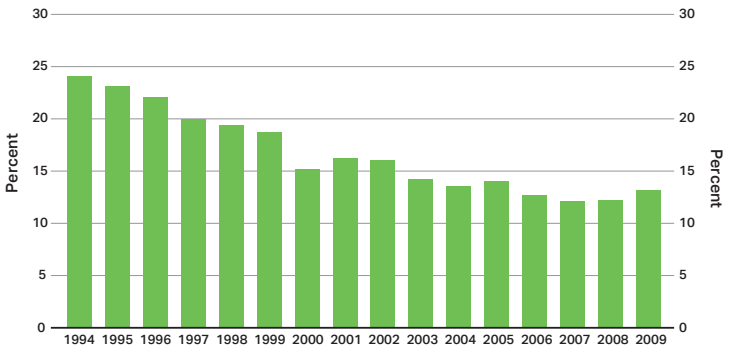
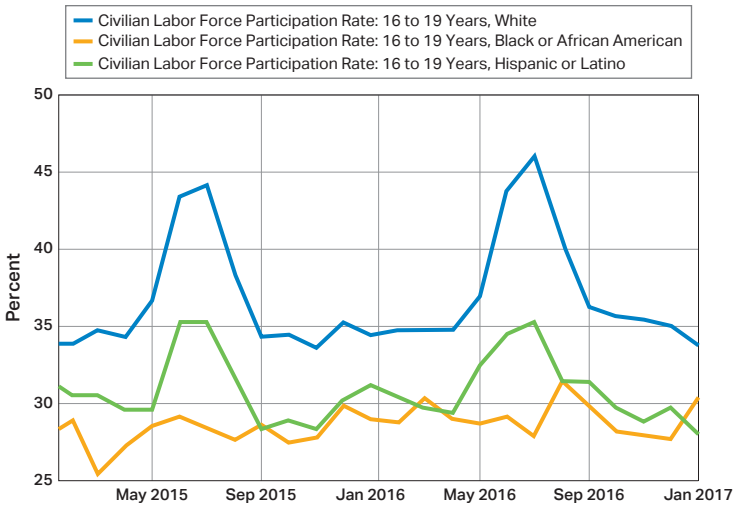
toward summer classes and unpaid internships rather than summer jobs. Since the mid-1990s, the share of teenagers who say they wish they were working has fallen by about 50 percent, according to the BLS. That suggests—although it cannot prove—that summer jobs have lost cultural cachet, as the norm has shifted away from working.

Share of Non-Working Teens Who Say They Wish They Were Working



8 It's important to note that it's probably white adults who feel the strongest nostalgia for summer jobs. Here's a look at the teen participation rate for the last two full years for whites, Hispanics, and blacks. Each July and August sees a 10-point jump in the number of white teenage workers, a 5-point jump in the number of Hispanic teen workers, and hardly any movement among black teenagers. (There is evidence that Asian teens are more like white teens in this regard.)



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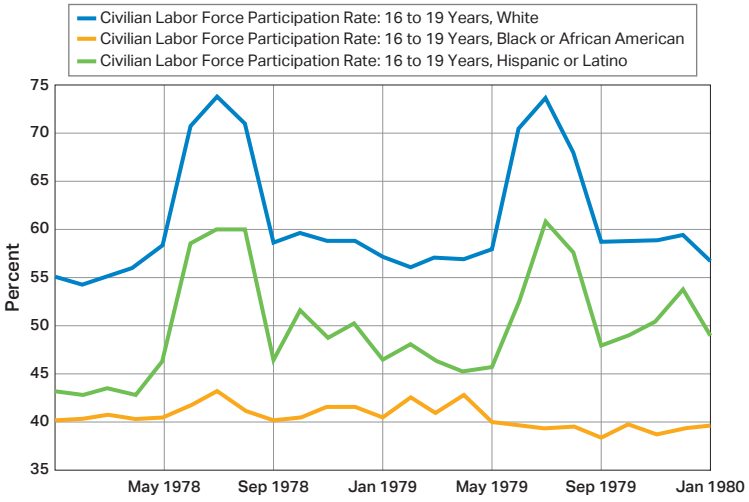
9 Compare that to 1978 and 1979, the statistical peak of the teen summer job. In July and August in the late 1970s, 30 percent of white teens flooded into the labor force, along with 20 percent of Hispanics. Again, black teen participation hardly budged.



10 Putting these two graphs together, two things are clear. First, the summer-job bump has declined for all ethnicities in the last 40 years. Second, summer jobs are the province of the white and wealthy. Children of richer families are more likely to take part-time summer jobs, according to a report from the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University. But black and low-income teens are less likely to work, not only because their neighborhoods have fewer opportunities, but also because their families have fewer connections to companies with internships and part-time jobs. Altogether, summer jobs may be yet another vector through which privilege becomes inherited from one generation to the next.

11 Is there any good reason to be nostalgic for teen summer jobs? Don't they teach kids responsibility, "soft skills," and a humbling tolerance for the tedium of office life? There are several studies that show summer jobs for teens pay a long-term dividend in higher earnings and reduced crime. But there are even more studies hailing the benefits of high-school completion and college attendance, and many teens have to choose between education and work. (It will be interesting to see if the summer job has a resurgence in the new low-unemployment economy.)

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12 The mysterious disappearance of the summer job for teenagers turns out to be a perfect parable for the flexibility of the workforce. Many of the jobs that teenagers used to do no longer exist; they've gone to older Americans and new immigrants. But rather than use the fallow months to quintuple their video-game time, teenagers are taking the time to invest in their educational future. This is hardly the place to expend America's finite national anxiety.

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